

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

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INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 290003Z JAN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 020388

E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: PFOR, US, UG

SUBJECT: US-UGANDAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) BONN 877; (B) USUN 244; (C) NAIROBI 7750

1. GENERAL AMIN APPEARS TO BE ACCELERATING HIS CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH U.S., AND PRESUMABLY AGAIN BECOME RECIPIENT OF SIGNIFICANT U.S. ASSISTANCE. IN ADDITION TO HIS APPROACH TO FRG AMBASSADOR REPORTED REFTEL (A), HE HAS PROPOSED DIRECTLY TO USG THROUGH HIS REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON AND NY TO SEND A SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO DISCUSS IMPROVED U.S.-UGANDAN RELATIONS; AND HE HAS HAD HIS PERM REP IN NY ISSUE PRESS RELEASE QUOTING STATEMENT BY AMIN OF INTENTION TO IMPROVE
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RELATIONS WITH U.S. (REFTEL B).

2. AS PRELIMINARY REPLY TO REFTTEL (A) EMBASSY IS AUTHORIZED TO INFORM FRG OF DIRECT GOU APPROACH AND OUR RESPONSE. ON JAN. 9 UGANDAN PERMREP KINENE, ACCOMPANIED BY UGANDAN CHARGE, CALLED ON ACTING AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY MULCAHY. KINENE TRANSMITTED ORAL MESSAGE FROM AMIN THAT GOU WISHED "NEW CHAPTER" IN BILATERAL RELATIONS AND PROPOSED THAT A

SPECIAL ENVOY MOUSTAPHA RAMATHAN (FORMER UGANDAN AMB. TO U.S. AND PRESENTLY MINISTER OF COOPERATIVES AND MARKETING) TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS ALL ASPECTS OF U.S.-UGANDAN RELATIONS, INCLUDING REOPENING OF AMERICAN EMBASSY IN KAMPALA.

3. ON JAN. 24 MULCAHY CONVEYED OUR RESPONSE TO CHARGE. LATTER WAS TOLD THAT A DEPT. OFFICIAL (UNSPECIFIED) WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET WITH RAMATHAN AT A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT DATE IN EARLY FEBRUARY. MULCAHY MADE IT CLEAR THAT DECISION TO RECEIVE RAMATHAN DID NOT RPT NOT IN ANY WAY IMPLY THAT USG HAD REACHED ANY DECISION CONCERNING FUTURE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH UGANDA OR THAT USG INTENDED TO RE-OPEN EMBASSY IN KAMPALA. NO DECISION, MULCAHY SAID, WOULD BE MADE UNTIL AFTER TALKS WITH EMISSARY.

4. EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE IT EQUALLY CLEAR TO FRG THAT DECISION TO RECEIVE ENVOY CARRIES NO IMPLICATIONS OF CLOSER US RELATIONS WITH GOU. VISIT WILL SIMPLY PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS BILATERAL ISSUES IN DEPTH AND TO EXPRESS DIRECTLY TO HIGH-LEVEL UGANDAN OUR CONCERN OVER REPORTED VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA. RECEIPT OF ENVOY DOES INDICATE OUR WILLINGNESS NOT TO REJECT OUT OF HAND AMIN'S INITIATIVE.

5. FYI ONLY: DEPT.'S CURRENT ASSESSMENT IS THAT IT IS NOT RPT NOT IN U.S. INTEREST TO MAKE EARLY RETURN TO UGANDA FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. IT IS QUITE APPARENT AMIN'S PRIME MOTIVE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS IS DESIRE FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. OWING TO HIGHER PRIORITIES ELSEWHERE, SUCH ASSISTANCE NOW IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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IN CARDS. DIVERSION OF LIMITED AID RESOURCES TO ASSIST SUCH AN UNSYMPATHETIC AND ERRATIC GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED EITHER IN TERMS THOSE HIGHER PRIORITIES OR LIMITED US INTERESTS IN UGANDA.

B. EFFECTIVENESS AND SECURITY OF OFFICIAL AMERICAN PERSONNEL WOULD REMAIN A PROBLEM. AMIN'S PARANOID RHETORIC WOULD BE STIMULATED RATHER THAN SOFTENED BY "UNDER-

FOOT" PRESENCE OF OFFICIAL AMERICANS IN HIS CAPITAL CITY. THEY WOULD, AS PREVIOUSLY, BE READY TARGET FOR VERBAL AND POSSIBLY OTHER ABUSE. MOREOVER, GIVEN THE LIKELIHOOD OF CONTINUING ANTI-AMERICAN RHETORIC, IT SEEMS QUITE UNLIKELY THAT US EMBASSY PERSONNEL WOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN FRUITFUL RELATIONS WITH UGANDA CONTACTS OR ENJOY FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT.

C. UNQUESTIONABLY THERE HAVE BEEN WIDESPREAD VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA, INCLUDING MASS MURDER AND TORTURE. SUCH VIOLATIONS CONTINUE, THOUGH PERHAPS NOT SO EXTENSIVELY. WE WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY EXPOSING OURSELVES TO STRONG ADVERSE CRITICISM IF WE WERE TO GO BACK INTO KAMPALA NOW AND THUS GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF SUPPORTING AMIN.

D. THERE IS NOTHING IN AMIN'S PRESENT ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS TO GIVE USG CAUSE TO THINK THAT IT WOULD BE ABLE TO EXERT CONSTRUCTIVE INFLUENCE ON AMIN.

6. THESE AND OTHER REASONS UNDERLIE CURRENT US VIEW RE DESIRABILITY OF REOPENING US EMBASSY IN KAMPALA AT THIS TIME. NEVERTHELESS, WE PLAN TO RECEIVE MINISTER, WHO IS FRIEND OF U.S., CORDIALLY, AND HAVE FRANK AND FULL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM. END FYI. KISSINGER

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